

Message Text

SECRET

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S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 TEL AVIV 7726

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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, IS
SUBJECT: DAYAN'S INTERPRETATION OF ISRAELI CABINET STATEMENT OF
JUNE 18

1. I HAD A NINETY-MINUTE DISCUSSION ON THE CABINET STATE-
MENT WITH DAYAN JUNE 19. EVRON, RUBINSTEIN AND BLACKWILL
WERE ALSO PRESENT. MAIN POINTS OF THAT DISCUSSION FOLLOW.
SUPPLEMENTARY ACCOUNT WILL BE SENT SEPTTEL.

2. THROUGHOUT DISCUSSION DAYAN WORKED HARD TO PUT THE BEST
POSSIBLE FACE ON ISRAELI RESPONSE. AGAIN AND AGAIN HE
SUGGESTED IN HIS INDIRECT WAY THAT THERE WAS MUCH MORE IN
THE ISRAELI CABINET ANNOUNCEMENT THAN MET THE EYE. ALTHOUGH
HE NEVER SAID IT DIRECTLY, THE THRUST OF HIS EXPLANATION
WAS THAT THERE WAS MUCH MORE FLEXIBILITY IN THE ISRAELI
POSITION THAN WAS EVIDENT IN THE CABINET PRONOUNCEMENT,
AND BECAUSE OF THE CABINET DISCUSSIONS OF THE PAST FEW
WEEKS, MUCH MORE ISRAELI FLEXIBILITY THAN BEGIN HIMSELF WAS
COMFORTABLE WITH. HOWEVER, IN ANALYZING THE CORE OF DAYAN'S
EXPLANATIONS, I FIND FEW SILVER LININGS. BOTTOM LINE IS THAT
STATEMENT IS CAREFULLY DRAWN TO LIMITS SET BY GOI'S SELF-RULE
PLAN--WHICH REMAINS GOI POLICY. CABINET STATEMENT TRIES
TO RESPOND POSITIVELY TO QUESTIONS WE POSED, WITHOUT HOWEVER
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VIOLATING ANY PRINCIPLES IN THAT PROPOSAL.

3. IN RESPONSE TO MY REQUEST THAT HE ELABORATE AS FULLY AS
POSSIBLE ON THE CABINET STATEMENT, DAYAN FIRST CONFIRMED
AGAIN THAT THE WORD "PARTIES" HAS TWO DIFFERENT MEANINGS IN
STATEMENT. "FUTURE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE PARTIES" IN PARA-
GRAPH TWO REFERS TO ISRAEL, JORDAN AND REPRESENTATIVES OF

PALESTINIAN PEOPLE LIVING IN THE TERRITORIES. "PARTIES" CONDUCTING NEGOTIATIONS MENTIONED IN PARAGRAPH THREE WOULD BE ISRAEL, EGYPT, JORDAN AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PALESTINIANS LIVING IN THE TERRITORIES. DAYAN SAID EXCLUSION OF EGYPT IN INTERPRETATION OF PARA 2 STEMS FROM LANGUAGE OF BEGIN'S AUTONOMY PLAN AND GOI ASSUMPTION IN ANSWERING US QUESTIONS THAT SELF-RULE REGIME WOULD OPERATE ON WEST BANK AND GAZA DURING PERIOD LEADING UP TO FIVE-YEAR POINT HIGHLIGHTED BY WASHINGTON. I ASKED IF THIS DISTINCTION EXCLUDED PERMANENT LINKS BETWEEN GAZA AND EGYPT OR BETWEEN WEST BANK AND EGYPT. DAYAN SAID IT DID AS SELF-RULE PLAN IS PRESENTLY FORMULATED BY GOI, BUT ADDED THAT PRINCIPLES OF AUTONOMY SCHEME WOULD BE REVIEWED AFTER FIVE YEARS. IT WAS POSSIBLE THAT SOME PRINCIPLES WOULD BE ALTERED AT THAT TIME THROUGH MUTUAL AGREEMENT. IT WAS THUS THEORETICALLY POSSIBLE EGYPT WOULD BE BROUGHT INTO IMPLEMENTING ROLE AFTER THAT REVIEW. HOWEVER, DAYAN ADDED SIGNIFICANTLY, THE GOI BELIEVED THERE SHOULD BE A "BUFFER ZONE" BETWEEN EGYPT AND ISRAEL*

4. I NEXT ASKED DAYAN TO INTERPRET THE PHRASE IN THE CABINET ANNOUNCEMENT THAT THE "NATURE OF FUTURE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE PARTIES WILL BE CONSIDERED AND AGREED UPON," AND ESPECIALLY HIS ADDITIONAL COMMENT TO ME YESTERDAY THAT THE CABINET REALLY REACHED CONSENSUS THAT THE PERMANENT NATURE OF FUTURE RELATIONS WOULD BE DECIDED AFTER THE END OF FIVE YEARS. HOW WAS GOI LANGUAGE DIFFERENT IN SUBSTANCE
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FROM THE PREFERRED US RESPONSE? HE RESPONDED THAT FIRST DIFFERENCE WAS THAT UNDER GOI PUBLIC FORMULATION, AS WELL AS DAYAN'S PRIVATE INTERPRETATION, ISSUE OF SOVEREIGNTY OVER TERRITORY WOULD REMAIN OPEN AS IN AUTONOMY PLAN, AS LONG, HE ADDED, AS NONE OF THE PARTIES RAISED IT.

5. ISRAEL WAS ADDRESSING ITS RESPONSE TO THE US QUESTIONS ESSENTIALLY ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS AND RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN ISRAEL, JORDAN AND THE PALESTINIAN ARABS, AND NOT REPEAT NOT THE STATUS, PERMANENT OR OTHERWISE, OF THE WEST BANK AND GAZA GEOGRAPHIC ENTITIES. THAT WAS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT MAJORITY ON ONE HAND AND WEIZMAN AND THE DMC ON THE OTHER. AT THE END OF FIVE YEARS, THE NATURE OF ALL THESE ARRANGEMENTS WOULD BE AGREED UPON. FOR EXAMPLE, THE PALESTINIAN ARABS MIGHT THEN WANT THEIR EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM AND DEPARTMENT SUBORDINATED COMPLETELY TO JORDAN. ON THE OTHER HAND, THEY MIGHT PREFER AGRICULTURE LINKED MORE CLOSELY TO ISRAEL. IN YET ANOTHER, IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE FOR ALL THREE PARTIES TO EQUALLY PARTICIPATE IN ADMINISTERING SOME ACTIVITY. BUT NONE OF THIS HAD ANYTHING TO DO WITH SOVEREIGNTY.

6. THESE LINKAGES AMONG THE PARTIES, DAYAN CONTINUED, WAS WHAT THE "NATURE OF RELATIONS" MEANT. THE WORD "PERMANENT" WAS NOT USED IN GOI RESPONSE ONLY BECAUSE RELATIONS ORDINARILY EVOLVE, UNLIKE THE STATUS OF GEOGRAPHIC ENTITIES. HOWEVER, IF AFTER FIVE YEARS OF AUTONOMY THE PARTIES ARE SURE OF WHAT THEY WANT, ISRAEL HAS AGREED THROUGH THE CABINET STATEMENT THAT THE NATURE OF RELATIONS --THE NATURE OF THESE LINKAGES -- COULD MORE OR LESS BE PERMANENTLY DECIDED UPON, PROVIDING EVERYONE CONCURRED.

7. I THEN TOLD DAYAN THAT THE PURPOSE OF THE FIRST US QUESTION WAS TO GET AT THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AN OPEN-ENDED PROCESS AND ONE WHICH WOULD HAVE A CLEARCUT RESOLUTION AT THE END OF FIVE YEARS. WE WERE TRYING TO ELIMINATE THE
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ELEMENT OF AMBIGUITY, THUS WE RAISED THE QUESTION OF SOVEREIGNTY OR "PERMANENT STATUS." DAYAN SAID THE WORD "PERMANENT" DOESN'T "FIT THE SITUATION VERY WELL." AS LONG AS EACH PARTY CAN RAISE THE SOVEREIGNTY ISSUE, THERE CANNOT REALLY BE A PERMANENT SOLUTION. SO, HE SAID, "LET'S DECIDE AS PERMANENTLY AS WE CAN," LEAVING SOVEREIGNTY ASIDE. HE SAID

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THIS WAS A CLEAR ADVANCE ON ARTICLE 26 OF THE AUTONOMY PLAN WHICH WAS INDEED OPEN-ENDED. HERE THE GOI HAS COMMITTED ITSELF TO REACHING A DECISION AFTER THE FIVE-YEAR INTERIM

PERIOD ABOUT THE NATURE OF RELATIONS WHICH WOULD BE AS PERMANENT AS POSSIBLE.

8. I THEN MOVED TO THE PHRASE IN THE ANNOUNCEMENT THAT ADMINISTRATIVE AUTONOMY WOULD COME INTO FORCE "UPON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PEACE." WHAT EXACTLY DID THAT MEAN? DAYAN REPLIED THAT IT WAS A VERBATIM TRANSLATION INTO ENGLISH OF A PHRASE THAT APPEARED IN THE TITLE OF THE GOI'S AUTONOMY PLAN. SOME PEOPLE, I NOTED, COULD INTERPRET THE LANGUAGE IN THE FOLLOWING WAY.
FIRST, ISRAEL SIGNS A PEACE TREATY WITH EGYPT, JORDAN AND PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATIVES. THEN THE TREATY IS IMPLEMENTED. THIS TAKES SEVERAL YEARS. THEN AND ONLY THEN, AFTER FULL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED, WOULD THE FIVE YEARS OF AUTONOMY BEGIN. IN REPLY, DAYAN QUIPPED "WE ARE BAD ENOUGH AS WE ARE -- DON'T MAKE US WORSE." THE FIVE YEARS WOULD START, HE STRESSED, UPON SIGNATURE OF PEACE TREATIES, IMMEDIATELY AFTER WHICH THE SELF-RULE PLAN WOULD BE IMPLEMENTED. (HE ACKNOWLEDGED, INTERESTINGLY, DURING THIS PART OF OUR TALK THAT AGREEMENT AMONG THE PARTIES IS INDEED NECESSARY TO IMPLEMENT THE AUTONOMY PLAN,

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CONTRARY TO PREVIOUS MEETINGS WHEN HE HAS ALLEGED IT COULD BE IMPLEMENTED UNILATERALLY IF NECESSARY.)

9. I NEXT ASKED DAYAN WHY THERE WAS NO REFERENCE IN THE ISRAELI REPLY TO 242. HE RESPONDED THAT BECAUSE THEY HAD ADDRESSED OUR QUESTIONS, IT DID NOT MEAN THEY HAD TO REPEAT OUR PROPOSED ANSWERS. (INDEED, HE INDICATED THAT THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE RESENTMENT IN THE CABINET THAT WE HAD GIVEN THEM BOTH QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.) HOWEVER, THE GOI HAD STUDIED ALL THE ELEMENTS IN THE PROPOSED U.S. RESPONSE, AND THE ISSUE OF 242 HAD COME UP IN YESTERDAY'S CABINET DISCUSSIONS. DAYAN SAID HE TOLD THE CABINET THAT BARAK HAD CONFIRMED TO THE PRESIDENT IN MARCH THAT 242 APPLIED TO ALL AREAS. FURTHER THE MARCH 22 ISRAEL DRAFT DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES HAD ACCEPTED 242 AS A BASIS FOR NEGOTIATIONS WITH ALL ITS NEIGHBORS EXPLICITLY INCLUDING JORDAN. "SO EVERYONE IN THE CABINET IS NOW AGREED THAT 242 APPLIES TO NEGOTIATIONS WITH JORDAN." DAYAN THEN WENT ON TO AFFIRM UNEQUIVOCALLY "THERE WILL BE WITHDRAWAL," (AS CALLED FOR IN 242), AND JORDAN IS INCLUDED. AFTER ALL, HE NOTED "WITH RESPECT TO JORDAN THERE IS NOTHING EXCEPT THE WEST BANK TO TALK ABOUT. WE CAN'T WITHDRAW FROM EAST OF THE JORDAN RIVER." THEN, I BELIEVE, WE GOT TO THE REAL REASON FOR THE ABSENCE OF 242 FROM THE ANNOUNCEMENT. DAYAN SAID IT WAS HARD FOR BEGIN TO ACCEPT A REFERENCE TO 242 IN GOI RESPONSE, THOUGH HE HAD PROPOSED IT TO BEGIN. NONETHELESS, HE INSISTED, THE CABINET DISCUSSION LEFT NO DOUBT THAT ALL THE PRINCIPLES

OF 242, INCLUDING THE WITHDRAWAL PRINCIPLE, DID APPLY TO ALL FRONTS, INCLUDING JORDAN.

10. MAKING POINT THAT DAYAN WOULD BE SPEAKING FOR THE GOVERNMENT LATER TODAY, I ASKED HIM IF HE COULD INCLUDE IN HIS KNESSET SPEECH THE SUBSTANCE OF THAT CABINET CONSENSUS
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CONCERNING THE APPLICABILITY OF 242 AND ALL ITS PRINCIPLES TO THE WEST BANK. HE RESPONDED THAT HE WOULD TELL THE KNESSET THAT THE ISRAELI PROPOSAL FOR SELF-RULE WAS CONSISTENT WITH ALL THE PRINCIPLES OF 242, AND THAT THE AUTONOMY PLAN MEETS THE WITHDRAWAL CLAUSE OF 242. HE WOULD REFER BOTH TO BARAK'S EXPLANATION TO THE PRESIDENT AND TO THE MARCH 22 ISRAELI DRAFT PRINCIPLES. THEN, DAYAN SAID, "IT GETS TRICKY." HE WAS CLEARLY REFERRING TO BEGIN.

11. I THEN ASKED ABOUT PHRASE IN STATEMENT REFERRING TO PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATIVES "ELECTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE ADMINISTRATIVE AUTONOMY." THAT, DAYAN OBSERVED, WAS AS SPECIFIC AS GOI WANTED TO GET AND SHOULD BE ENOUGH FOR ALL CONCERNED. AFTER ALL, IF ISRAEL REACHED A PEACE AGREEMENT WITH SADAT, IT WOULD NOT ASK FOR A REFERENDUM IN EGYPT. (NOT ONE OF DAYAN'S MORE FELICITOUS ANALOGIES.) I STRESSED I WANTED TO MAKE SURE I HAD THIS POINT RIGHT. THE ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES WOULD RATIFY THE AGREEMENT, RATHER THAN THEIR BEING ANY MORE GENERAL EXPRESSION OF APPROVAL ON THE PART OF THE PALESTINIANS. DAYAN SAID "EXACTLY."

12. CONCLUDING, I TOLD DAYAN I APPRECIATED HAVING THIS ELABORATION AND WOULD FORWARD IT IMMEDIATELY TO WASHINGTON. WHAT DID HE SEE AS NEXT STEPS? WHAT DID GOI HOPE THESE ANSWERS WOULD LEAD TO? HE SAID FIRST ISSUE WAS WHETHER THERE WAS A PARTY WITH WHOM ISRAEL COULD NEGOTIATE A TREATY CONCERNING THE WEST BANK. ISRAEL WOULD SIT DOWN WITH SADAT, WITH HUSSEIN, OR WITH BOTH. BUT, DAYAN UNDERLINED, ISRAEL DOES NOT WISH ANOTHER U.S. "QUESTIONNAIRE." THE U.S. MIGHT HAVE PREFERRED ANOTHER ANSWER, BUT THE ONE IT RECEIVED WAS GOI POLICY. DAYAN EMPHASIZED THAT THERE SHOULD BE NO MORE PRECONDITIONS FOR THE RESUMPTION OF DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN ISRAEL AND EGYPT. THOSE DIRECT TALKS COULD BE WITH WEIZMAN THROUGH THE MILITARY COMMITTEE IF SINAI WAS THE CENTRAL SUBJECT. IF THE EMPHASIS WAS ON THE PROBLEM OF THE PALESTINIANS, THE POLITICAL COMMITTEE WOULD BE AN ACCEPTABLE
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FORUM. ISRAEL WAS ALSO FLEXIBLE CONCERNING WHERE, WHEN AND HOW THESE DISCUSSIONS GOT STARTED AGAIN. BUT THE MAIN ISRAELI GOAL NOW WAS TO RENEW DIRECT CONTACT WITH EGYPT.

13. COMMENT: UPON A FEW HOURS REFLECTION, AND AFTER THE EXPLANATION WHICH DAYAN GAVE ME TODAY, IN MY JUDGMENT THIS CABINET STATEMENT REFLECTS THE OUTER LIMIT OF WHAT THE BEGIN GOVERNMENT, AS PRESENTLY CONSTITUTED, WILL BE WILLING AND ABLE TO SAY PUBLICLY ABOUT PRINCIPLES GOVERNING THE FUTURE OF THE WEST BANK WITHOUT A RETURN TO DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS. INDEED, WE MAY WELL NOT CONVINCE ANY BEGIN GOVERNMENT TO MOVE FURTHER ON THIS ISSUE AT THE NEGOTIATING TABLE EITHER, DESPITE DAYAN'S CLEAR DESIRE TO THE CONTRARY. BUT IF WE CAN GET THE GOI TO INCH AHEAD, IT WILL ONLY BE AFTER THE RESUMPTION OF DIRECT ISRAELI-EGYPTIAN NEGOTIATIONS AND AN EGYPTIAN COUNTERPROPOSAL TO THE BEGIN AUTONOMY PLAN. UNTIL THEN, BEGIN WILL SURELY BELIEVE AFTER THE STRESS OF THESE LAST WEEKS THAT HE HAD DONE ENOUGH.

14. DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO REPEAT TO AMMAN AND JERUSALEM. LEWIS

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